DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 082 262 CS 500 427

AUTHOR Taylor, Orlando L.
TITLE Black Language: The Research Variable.
INSTITUTION Speech Communication Association, New York, N.Y.
PUB DATE Nov 72
NOTE 30p.; Paper presented at the Black Communication Conference (Pittsburgh, Pa., November 1972)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS *African American Studies; *Black Community; Language Development; *Language Research; Language Usage; *Linguistics; Negro Attitudes; Negro Culture; *Negro Dialects; Psycholinguistics; Sociolinguistics; Speech Habits
IDENTIFIERS *Afro American Communication

ABSTRACT

There is justification for the study of black language to help improve language self-concepts in the black community and to assist in reducing the oppressions of black people. Research literature has generally centered on these approaches: (1) black language is an unsystematic, childlike linguistic system; (2) it is basically an extension of standard English and American usage; or (3) it is an extension of the West African linguistic systems. These approaches have inherent limitations. Future research should be done by those with skills in linguistics, sociolinguistics, and psycholinguistics, and by those who also have an interest in and commitment to the black community. Seven important areas for future research are: linguistic descriptions of black language usage, the historical development of black language, acquisition of language by black children, attitudes by whites toward black language, blacks' language attitudes and aspirations, changing negative attitudes toward black language, and black language usage as related to success in the educational system. (RN)

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED 082262

DRAFT

BLACK LANGUAGE: THE RESEARCH VARIABLE

by

Orlando L. Taylor
Federal City College

A paper prepared for the
Conference on Black Communications

University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

November 1972

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Speech Communication Association
TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER."

CS 200 787

Copyright ©1973 Speech Communication Association

PART I

BLACK LANGUAGE AND THE RESEARCH SETTING

The Black man's speech has been of historical interest in the so-called "New World".[1] Indeed, such should be the case. Blacks, after all, were brought to the New World for the express purpose of being enslaved--a contradictory notion to the Judaic-Christian concepts of the founding fathers. While the Black man's role has changed over time, it has continually been one of inferiority--even to the present time. In situations where a group is systemically oppressed or otherwise assigned to positions of inferiority, the oppressive culture frequently attempts to justify its actions by either overstating its own worth or by discrediting the value of the oppressed culture. In either case, the oppressor makes it appear as though he is almost doing the oppressee a favor by permitting him to live in a civilized society. After all, it is better to be a slave in a civilized society than free in a savage jungle.

Language, as perhaps the most overt reflector of cultural values and ideas, is a logical arena for this whole game to be played. Fanon (1961) states the case as follows from the perspective of the Black Antillian:

> The Negro of the Antilles will be proportionately whiter--that is, he will come closer to being a real human being--in direct ratio to his mastery of the French language . ... A man who has a language consequently possesses the world expressed and implied by that language. What we are getting at becomes plain: Mastery of language affords remarkable power.
>
> Every colonized people--in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality--finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is, with the culture of the mother country. The colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country's cultural standards. He becomes whiter as he renounces his blackness, his jungle. (p. 18)

Language may be viewed as the collection of verbal symbols and rules used by individuals in a specified society to represent concepts. In this definition, we see that language is a code which, as a structural system, is inextricably linked and, indeed, dependent on both psychological (cognitive) and socio-cultural controls.

From this framework, Black language, at least that produced in the United States, can be defined as the collection of lexical items transmitted by means of phonological, syntactic, and suprasegmental systems used by Black Americans to represent what might be loosely called "Black Culture." This language, and indeed this culture, is not totally distinct from General American language and culture, or from the language and culture of the geographical regions where Blacks reside. Further, Black language, like all human languages, demonstrates similarities with all other languages which are explained by the concept of "linguistic universals".

The above definitions are couched primarily in linguistic, psycholinguistic, and sociolinguistic terminology and concepts. As such, they suggest that Black language can be described and studied in its essence by the research philosophies and procedures dictated by the fields of linguistics, psycholinguistics, and sociolinguistics. This conclusion is both inappropriate and inaccurate. Linguistics and linguistics-related disciplines focus primarily on the structure of verbal language, the psychological processes underlying the human use of these structures, the social and cultural influencies on the use of language, and the

relationship between the structure of spoken language and the acquisition of reading and writing. Still there are other topics related to language which are not handled by the linguistic sciences, e.g.,non-verbal communications, rhetoric styles, language and folk beliefs, oral history, etc. Thus, comprehensive research in Black language must, by definition, include research from the perspective of other disciplines.

The present paper will focus, however, on linguistic and linguistic-related aspects of Black language research. Though language can be viewed from any one of four modalities--production (speech), auditory comprehension, writing, reading--the paper deals with research on linguistic topics related to Black speech.

WHY STUDY BLACK LANGUAGE

Research in Black language has become increasingly stylish. It has prompted numerous reactions, some negative and some positive. The most negative reaction is related to the belief by some that there is no such thing as a distinct Black language but, if there is, constant discussion of the subject will lead to further encouragement of racial separation and isolation. In short, the study of the topic is viewed as racist (in that Blacks are falsely placed into a specified linguistic "bag") or "Uncle Tomish" (in that Blacks who study the topic play into the hands of those who believe in Black racial inferiority and subsequent social segregation).

Quite apart from its philosophical and procedural merits, research on any topic can be evaluated in terms of its purposes. Indeed, it seems reasonable to ask of any researcher, "Why are you studying this topic?". It follows, then, that the merits of Black language research can be determined, at least in part, by the reasons advanced by the researchers. Let us examine some of the major reasons given for doing research on the topic.

Reason 1--Intellectual Curiosity. Those who support this argument claim that Black language, like any other language, is interesting and, therefore, a person might be intellectually curious about such topics as a) the structure of the language, b) its varieties, c) its similarities and differences with other languages and dialects, and d) its historical development. While it is reasonable for one to have intellectual

curiosity, this author believes that the situation of Blacks in the United States is such that they can ill-afford the luxury of being studied for the sole reason of satisfying the pure intellectual curiosities of any individual--Black or white.

Reason 2--To Contribute to Scholarly Literature on Black Language Specifically and to Social Dialects Generally. This reason embraces more than intellectual curiosity, though curiosity may serve as a stimulant for a researcher to want to contribute to the scholarly literature. In general, the thrust of reason two involves a desire to define or help define the nature and use of Black language, and how it relates to other linguistic systems in the United States or other parts of the world. Frequently, those who cite the scholarly contribution argument express a desire to use descriptive data on Black language to develop theoretical concepts about the nature and development of Black languages throughout the world and, ultimately, to contribute to theories on linguistic and socio-linguistic universals. This justification for studying Black language is viewed equivocally. On the negative side, research conducted for scholarly reasons could lead to exploitation of the Black community for the narrow academic interests of some scholars--the objection stated to Reason 1. At the same time, however, data and theory reported by scholars might be quite useful to individuals desirous of doing applied research on Black language. It is indeed true that basic descriptive data and theoretical notions are essential underpinnings for applied research--no matter by

whom it is done. It is also true that many applied scholars lack sufficient depth in training and professional experience to produce the type of basic research needed to support applied research in Black language. Obviously, the "ideal" scholar has both basic and applied interests. In the final analysis, however, it makes little difference who does basic scholarly research so long as an attempt is made by someone to use it for applied purposes.

Reason 3--To Improve Language Self-Concepts in the Black Community. As stated earlier, Blacks labor under generally false and derogatory views about their language. Though explainable by systematic white degradation, such explanations are of minimal value for a group which feels badly about its speech. Fanon (1961) believes that Blacks' negative language views are a major contributor to negative self-concepts in the Black community. Thus, in an effort to "set the record straight" for both factual and psychological reasons, some researchers study Black language for the purpose of demonstrating its structural and historical credibility. While there is a certain absurdity associated with any culture having to justify its language[3], this reason certainly appears tenable.

Reason 4--To Change General American Attitudes Toward Black Speech. A fair amount of research has been reported which reveals that Americans generally have negative views toward Black American speech. These negative attitudes are believed to have deleterious educational, social,

political and economic effects on Black people. The attitudes are frequently attributed to the same misinformation which has led to the negative language self-concepts of Blacks discussed above. However, some view these negative attitudes as being symptomatic of negative views toward Black people and, therefore, only serve as excuses for engaging in various forms of white racism. Elements of truth probably exist in both views. Certainly, it seems reasonable to make attempts to determine the status of General American attitudes toward Black language and the extent to which they are related (in fact or in thought) to educational, social, political, and economic discrimination against Blacks. More important, it seems defensible to try to determine if and how negative language attitudes can be changed if, in fact, they are significant factors in the everyday lives of Black people.

Reason 5--To Determine the Relationship between the Speaking of Black Language and the Educational Success of Black Children. Those who cite this reason for doing research in Black language almost always state two facts which <u>may</u> be related. First, Black children, particularly those who who speak Black English, are failing in the nation's schools. Second, the language expectations of schools, including teachers' attitudes, tests, materials, etc., are those associated with Standard English. These facts and their possible relationship are then used to raise several educational questions, among them being:

a) Do present definitions of Standard or Educated English permit sufficient inputs from Black English?

b) Are there sufficient differences between Black English and Educated (Standard) English sufficient to account for the educational failures of Black children, particularly those related to the acquisition of reading and writing?

c) Are teachers' attitudes toward Black English sufficient to cause a "pygmalion effect" in the academic success (or failure) of Black children?

d) Do educational tests contain enough linguistic biases to systematically discriminate against speakers of Black English by underestimating their educational potential or achievement?

e) Are there sufficient dialect biases in educational materials, especially those designed for teaching reading and writing, to interfere with the learning rate or patterns of speakers of Black English?

These questions are reasonable and in need of answers. In short, they seem important enough to justify research in Black language on their own merit.

There are obviously more reasons for studying Black language than the few cited above. However, the ones given are believed sufficient to justify a certain type of linguistically oriented research on the subject--a) basic research with applied implications, b) research aimed toward improving language self-concepts in the Black community, and c) research which has the potential of reducing or eliminating social, educational, political, or economic oppression of Black people in the United States.

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The study of Black American speech has reached unprecedented prominence in the last decade. Population shifts in the nation's cities; increased self-awareness and demands for quality education in the Black community; and the emergence of rhetoric, interest, and money for "poverty populations" have all served to stimulate research interest in Black language.

Many students of Black language and its relationship to educational, social, political, and economic concerns of the Black community view such research as an innovation of the sixties. This view is not only inaccurate, but it has led to a considerable waste of time and talent in "rediscovering the wheel".

The purpose of this treatise is not to review all of the research that has been done on Black language.[5] Yet, the point must be made that all of the research of the past ten or so years has not produced new insights on the topic. Indeed, the research literature of this period has reiterated three of the major themes articulated by earlier works -- a) Black language is an unsystematic childlike language, b) Black language is of purely English origins, and c) Black language is only explainable from consideration of West African linguistics. The major contributions of the research of the sixties and seventies are as follows: First, there has been a

marked improvement in the quality of linguistic and sociolinguistic descriptions of Black English.[6] Second, more detailed data have been reported which are useful in evaluating the tenability of arguments b and c above.[7] Third, the past decade has seen the beginning of serious study of the relationship between Black language and certain educational questions, especially those associated with reading, writing, and the acquisition of Standard English.[8] Yet the fact remains, that everything new is not <u>really</u> new! The following examples help make this point.

<u>Black English as an Unsystematic, Childlike Linguistic System:</u>

During the first 5-7 years of the sixties, the overwhelming amount of research on Black language was done from the perspective that it was impoverished or, perhaps, pathological. Though numerous reasons were given for this condition -- some physical, some cultural, some genetic, some social, and some psychological -- the results were always the same. Black language was a deficient linguistic system! The classical position of researchers who drew this conclusion is seen in the writings of Bereiter and Engelmann (1966) who studied Black language under the guise of "the language of the culturally deprived":

> ...The disadvantaged child...usually does have a language, even though an immature and nonstandard one.... In such characteristics as sentence length, word variety, and the use of various grammatical categories and constructions, the language of disadvantaged children resembles that of other children at a lower age level.... The speech of the severely deprived seems to consist not of distinct words, as does the speech of middle-class

> children of the same age, but rather of whole phrases and sentences that function like giant words.... The second weakness... is a failure to master the use of structures and inflections which are necessary for the expression and manipulation of logical relationships. (pp. 31, 33, 34, 42)

The modern day, pathology view of Black language is no different from -- and equally untenable as the following unscholarly excerpt from Mencken (1936) which typifies the interpretation of scanty data from another era:

> Negroes have inherited no given names from their African ancestors and the naive, native languages of the Negro slaves seem to have left few marks upon their modern day language which...may be called the worst English in the world. It certainly seems to have fair claim to that distinction. (pp. 112)

Black Language as an Extension of English:

In the past 5-7 years there has been a vigorous articulation of the point that what is called Black language is, in reality, not Black but an extension of the English of the British Isles and the American South. This view is characterized as that of the dialectologist and is typified by the work of Williamson (1971).

> The ["Black" English] features above are neither Black nor white, but American. Some like the wh- question which has no auxiliary may be found in the speech of people everywhere. Some like "I'mo" are standard Southern English. Others are non-standard Southern.... A number of Black educators and civic leaders have not agreed with the researchers in their assessment of black student's speech. Most have no quarrel with what

has been found in his speech, but they do not accept the conclusions about what it is.

Again, the research per se is not new, only the interpretation of the data in such way as to reject the arguments that Black speech is unsystematic and childlike, and that Blacks are incapable of acquiring Standard English. Earlier work from this perspective was done with a pathology view of Blacks' use of speech similar to that described in the previous section.

Speaking on Gullah, perhaps the blackest of all Black language, Gonzales (1922) wrote:

> ...the African brought over or retained only a few words of his jungle tongue, and even these few are by no means authenticated as part of the original scant baggage of the Negro slaves.... As the small vocabulary of the jungle atrophied through disuse and was soon forgotten, the contribution to the language made by the Gullah Negroes is insignificant, except through the transformation wrought upon a large body of borrowed English words. (p. 17)

Krapp (1924) extended the argument by writing:

> ...The Gullah dialect is a very much simplified form of English with cases, numbers, genders, tenses reduced almost to the vanishing point.... Very little of the dialect, however, perhaps none of it, is derived from sources other than English. In vocabulary, in syntax, and pronunciation, practically all of the forms of Gullah can be explained on the basis of English, and probably only a little deeper delving would be necessary to account for those characteristics that still seem strange and mysterious.... Generalizations are always dangerous, but it is reasonably safe to say that not a single detail of Negro pronunciation or Negro syntax can be proved to have other than an English origin.

Reed Smith (1926) was even more emphatic -- and negative in his views:

> What the Gullahs seem to have done was to take a sizeable part of the English vocabulary as spoken on the coast by the white inhabitants from about 1700 on, wrap their tongues around it, and reproduce it with changes in tonality, pronunciation, cadence, and grammar to suit their native phonetic tendencies, and their existing needs of expression and communication. The result has been called by one writer, "the worst English in the world". It would certainly seem to have a fair claim to that distinction.... There are curiously few survivals of native African words in Gullah, a fact that has struck most students of the language. (pp. 22, 23)

Finally, Guy B. Johnson (1930) wrote as follows:

> There are older Negroes in the Sea Islands who speak in such a way that a stranger would have to stay around them several weeks before he could understand them and converse with them to his satisfaction. But this strange dialect turns out to be little more than the peasant English of two centuries ago, modified to suit the needs of the slaves. From Midland and Southern England came planters, artisans, shopkeepers, indentured servants, all of whom had more or less contact with the slaves, and the speech of these poorer white folk was so rustic that their more cultured countrymen had difficulty in understanding them. From this peasant speech and from the 'baby talk' used by masters in addressing them, the Negroes developed that dialect, sometimes known as Gullah, which remains the characteristic feature of the culture of the Negroes of coastal South Carolina and Georgia.... The grammar of the dialect is the simplified English grammar taken over from the speech of the poorer whites.... The use of many archaic English words no doubt contributed to the belief held in some quarters that the Sea Island Negroes use many African words. (pp. 49, 51)

All early writers who suggest that Black English is a purely English invention were not so harsh in their evaluation of it. Some, in fact, may be classified as apologists for the totally American based phenomenon.

Mencken (1936) provides a good example of this group of researchers:

> The Negro dialect, as we know it today, seems to have been formulated by song-writers for the minstrel shows; it did not appear in literature until the time of the Civil War; before that, as George Krapp shows...it was a vague and artificial lingo which had little relation to the actual speech of Southern blacks. (p. 71)

Black English As an Extension of West African Linguistic Systems:

The view that Black American speech can only be explained by considering the contributions made to it by West African linguistic systems may be called the "creolist" view of Black English. It has been espoused during the sixties by several authors, notably Stewart (1968), Dalby (1969), and, most recently, Dillard (1972). Going further, the position assumes that contemporary Black language should be viewed as the result of a pidginization/creolization process that had its origins either in West Africa or on the plantations of the American South. The thrust of this argument is that Black English is an African, not an English, invention and that the language is not only legitimate, but that it conforms to general principles of languages in contact, in this case an Afro-English contact.

Data supportive of the creolist position of Black English, though scanty, is intriguing and offer many theoretical possibilities for understanding present day American Blacks. Again, however, the data and theory

are not entirely new. In fact, many of the assertions articulated by modern day scholars are simply repeats of what has been reported earlier. especially by Lorenzo Turner, the oft ignored father of the study of Black language.

As early as 1938, Turner refuted the claims of those scholars who misinterpreted African influenced English as mispronunciations of American English:

> ...Gonzales published what was taken to be a complete glossary of Gullah. This contains about 1700 words, most of which are English words misspelled to indicate the Negro's mispronunciation. The other words in the glossary that are in reality African have been interpreted as English words which the Negro was unable to pronounce. For instance, the English phrase "done for fat" is given as being used by the Gullahs to mean "excessively fat" (the assumption being that in the judgment of the Gullah Negro when a person is very fat he is done for). But if Gonzales had had enough training in phonetics to reproduce the word accurately, it would have been dãfa, which is the Gullah word for fat, and if he had looked into a dictionary of the Vai language, spoken in Liberia, or consulted a Vai informant, he would have found that the Vai word for "fat" is dãfa (˜ _) lit., "mouth full".... Among other Gullah words which he or other American writers have interpreted as English, but which are African, are the Mende suwaŋgɔ (˜ ˜ _), "to be proud" (explained by Gonzales as a corruption of the English "swagger"); the Wolof lir, "small" (taken by Gonzales to be an abbreviated form of the English "little", in spite of the fact that the Gullah also uses "little" when he wishes to); the Wolof bɛnj (banj, bɔnj), "tooth" (explained by the Americans as a corruption of "bone"); the Twi "fa", "to take" (explained by the Americans as a corruption of the English "for"); the Wolof "fut", "to be nude" (assumed by the English to be the English "foot"); the Wolof dʒogal, "to rise" -- used in Gullah in the term "dʒogal board, rise-up board, seesaw" (explained by the Americans as "juggling board")....

Speaking in more detail about African survivals in Black American speech, Turner (1949) wrote:

> Up to the present time I have found in the vocabulary of the Negroes in coastal South Carolina and Georgia approximately four thousand West African words, besides many survivals in syntax, inflections, sounds, and intonation ... I have recorded in Georgia a few songs, the words of which are entirely African. In some songs both African and English words appear. This is true also of many folk-tales. There are many compound words one part of which is African and the other English. Sometimes whole African phrases appear in Gullah without change either of meaning or of pronunciation. Frequently African phrases have been translated into English. African given names are numerous.

The above parallels between early and modern research in Black language is not given to discredit the contemporary works -- only to put them in proper perspective. Hopefully, future scholars will maintain sufficient knowledge of the total research literature to the extent that unnecessary duplication of scholarship will be avoided. Only in this way can a vigorous forward movement occur in the Black language research.

PART II

A NATIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAM IN BLACK LANGUAGE

The arguments presented earlier in this paper pertaining to reasons for doing research in Black language are sufficient for the present author to conclude that there is a need for continued research on the topic, particularly of the applied type. The important question to raise at this point, however, is "what type of applied research is needed?". The thrust of this treatise is oriented toward linguistic type research, though it is fully recognized that all research on Black language need not or should not

be linguistic in nature. Surely, the subject can be addressed from many perspectives, e.g., Black rhetoric, Black folklore, Black semantics, etc. Still, the point must be made that the linguistic component is critical, especially for the scholar in speech communications, because it provides the most systematic way for looking at the structure and historical development of Black language. What follows is an exposition of the types of linguistic/sociolinguistic/psycholinguistic research needed in the area of Black language.

Some Preliminary Premises

On Definition:

Black language consists of the totality of language used in the Black community. It contains many varieties, with differences occurring as a function of such variables as geography, social class, age, sex, amount of education, etc. Some forms are standard and others are non-standard. Further, differences emerge as a function of the social situations in which the language is produced. Thus, an accurate view of the complete Black language system is best seen as a continuum of features which vary according to the above mentioned variables. While there are differences in the various types of Black language, there is, nonetheless, a common core of features across all types in phonology, syntax, vocabulary, and supra-segmental aspects.

Black language is not totally different from what we might call "American language". Likewise, since it is deeply rooted in Southern linguistics, it probably has many overlaps with "Southern language" -- both standard and nonstandard. At the same time, it overlaps with the regional varieties of American language spoken in the geographical areas where Blacks currently reside.

Viewed schematically, these overlaps are as follows:

In other words, the various Black languages (BL) in the United States intersect with both American language (AL) and one or more Regional languages (RL), especially Southern language. However, there is a core of linguistic features in Black language which are found in none of the American other language systems, e.g., the use of the continuative "be", and certain intonational contours which, though presently undefined, are sufficient to make most Black speakers ethnically identifiable, etc.

On Who Should Do Black Language Research:

A mild controversy rages on who should do Black language research. The present author believes Black language research should be done by the following groups of individuals, arranged in order of descending preference:

a) Researchers with technical skills in linguistics/sociolinguistics/psycholinguistics and serious interest in and commitment to the Black community.

b) Researchers with serious interest in and commitment to the Black community with some technical skills in linguistics/sociolinguistics/psycholinguistics.

c) Researchers with technical skills in linguistics/sociolinguistics/psycholinguistics and some interest in and commitment to the Black community.

Note that no endorsement is given to individuals with little or no interest or commitment to the Black community with or without technical skills in the linguistic sciences. Note further that biology or cultural membership of the researcher is not listed as a variable, though it is logical to presume that individuals with the greatest amount of interest in and commitment to the Black community are likely to themselves be Black!

On Academic Background:

Obviously all individuals with interest in doing linguistic type research on Black language should have academic preparations in one of the linguistic sciences -- linguistics, sociolinguistics, or psycholinguistics. Additionally, it is desirable for the researcher to have academic preparation in one or more of the following disciplines:

a) anthropology

b) speech communications

c) folklore

d) experimental, child, or educational psychology

e) sociology

f) American, Black, or African history

A LISTING OF TOPICS OF NEEDED RESEARCH IN BLACK LANGUAGE

The following topics strike this author as being in need of study by scholars in the area of Black language. Obviously, the list is not exhuastive. Further, it is unlikely that all the topics listed will be of interest to scholars in the field of Speech Commur cations. The intent here is to present an organized set of research goals which might serve as a stimulant for scholarly discussion and debate. Such discussion might lead to a carefully organized and coordinated national effort in Black language research.

I. Linguistic Descriptions -- Not limited to analyses of phonology and and syntax. Strong emphasis on semantic (including idioms) and suprasegmental features of Black language.

A. Descriptions of the varieties of Black language across regions, social classes, ages, and educational levels -- standard and nonstandard.

B. Contrastive analyses of Black language with linguistic systems used by other groups of speakers of comparable age, sex, social class, and education in the regions where Blacks reside -- standard and nonstandard.

C. Influences of Black language on other linguistic systems -- socially, regionally, and nationally.

D. Influences of other social, regional, and national linguistic systems on Black language.

II. The Historical Development of Black Language. (Contingent on the availability of valid data.)

A. West African linguistic systems: 1600-present -- pidgins, creoles, native, and official languages.

B. Black Speech in the slavery and reconstruction eras.

C. Black speech in the Post Reconstruction-World War I era.

D. Black speech between World Wars I and II.

E. Black speech between World War II and the Civil Rights era.

F. Black speech since 1960.

III. The Acquisition of Language by Black Children

A. The acquisition of Black Standard English. (Presumably similar to that previously described by McNiell, Menyuk, Slobin and others.)

B. The acquisition of other varieties of Black language.

IV. Attitudes toward Black Language

A. Lay Public attitudes

B. Employer attitudes

C. Teacher attitudes

D. Language Scholar attitudes

V. Black Community Attitudes and Aspirations Pertaining to Language

A. Parents' attitudes and aspirations

B. Students' attitudes and aspirations

C. Black leaders' attitudes and aspirations

D. Attitudes and aspirations of the Black lay public

VI. Changing Negative Attitudes toward Black Language

A. The effects of education -- workshops, papers, brochures, conferences, etc.

B. The effects of the use of Black language by the mass media

C. The effects of legal, structural, or rules changes on attitudes toward Black language -- e.g., anti-language discrimination legislation; changes in state/local teacher certification requirements to include courses in Black language; curricular requirements in colleges and universities, etc.

VII. Black Language and Education

A. The psychological and educational impact of negative attitudes toward Black language or Black students

B. The relationship between teachers' language views and Black students' academic achievement

NOTES

1. The viewing of the Americas as the "New World" is a flagrant example of European ethrocentrism. It implies that the Americas were not really "discovered" until Europeans found and settled them, despite the fact that Indians had developed numerous, highly developed cultures in the Americas long before the arrival of Europeans.

2. See Greenberg (1966) for an in-depth discussion of linguistic universals.

3. As stated by Lenneberg (1967), language is a uniquely human characteristic which is present throughout the human species. Indeed, the presence of a legitimate human language is a human given.

4. A good review of Black language research is available in Dillard (1972). A comprehensive bibliography on the subject appears in Tayor & Hayes (1971).

5. A review of linguistic descriptions of Black English has been prepared by Fasold & Wolfram (1970).

6. Data supportive of creolist and dialectologist view of Black English are contained in Dillard (1972) and Williams & Burke (1971).

7. The relationship between Black language and certain educational questions are explored in Baratz & Shuy (1969), Fasold & Shuy (1970) and Taylor & Hayes (1971).

8. The Pygmalion Effect" or the relationship between teacher expectancies and pupil's intellectual development is discussed by Rosenthal & Jenkins (1968).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brartz, J., and Shuy, R., Teaching Black Children to Read. Washington: Center for Applied Linguistics (1969).

Bereiter, C., and Englemann, S., Teaching Disadvantaged Children. Englewood Cliffs (N. J.): Prentice Hall (1966).

Dalby, D., Black Through White, Patterns of Communication. Paper presented at Indiana University, Department of African Studies (1969).

Dillard, J., Black English. New York: Random House (1972).

Fanon, F., Black Faces, White Masks. New York: Grove (1964).

Fasold, R., and Shuy, R., Teaching Standard English in the Inner City. Washington: Center for Applied Linguistics (1970).

Fasold, R., and Wolfram, W., Some Linguistic Features of Negro Dialect. In Fasold, R., and Shuy, R., Teaching Standard English in the Inner City. Washington: Center for Applied Linguistics (1970).

Greenberg, J. Universals of Language. Cambridge (Mass.): MIT Press (1966).

Gonzales, A., The Black Border. Columbia (S.C.): University of South Corolina Press (1922).

Johnson, G. Folk Culture on St. Helena Island, South Carolina. Chapel Hill (N.C.): University of North Carolina Press (1930).

Krapp, G., The English of the Negro, American Mercury, 2, 190-195 (1924).

Lenneberg, E. Biological Foundations of Language. New York: Wiley (1967).

Mencken, H. L., The American Language. New York: Knopf (1936).

Rosenthal, R., and Jacobson, L., Pygmalion in the Classroom. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston (1968).

Smith, R., Gullah, Bulletin of the University of South Carolina, 190 (1926).

Stewart, W., Continuity and Change in American Negro Dialects, The Florida FL Reporter, 7, (1968).

Taylor,O., and Hayes, A., Five Interrelated Studies to Increase the Effectiveness of English Language Instruction in Schools (Technical Report). Washington: Center for Applied Linguistics (1971).

Turner, L., Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect. Chicago: University of Chicago Press (1949).

Turner, L., West African Survivals in the Vocabulary of Gullah. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Modern Language Association (1938).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Williamson, J., On Black Dialect, The Crisis, (1971).

Williamson, J., and Burke, V., A Various Language. New York: Holt, Finehart and Winston (1971).